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How to take ownership and get full access to files and folders in Windows 10

RECOMMENDED: Click here to fix Windows issues and optimize system performance

Sometimes you need to get full access to some file or folder in Windows 10. It can be a system file or folder, or one which was created by a user account that no longer exists. In most cases, the Windows operating system will prevent you from doing any operation on such files and folders. In this article, we will see how to take ownership and get full access to files and folders in Windows 10.

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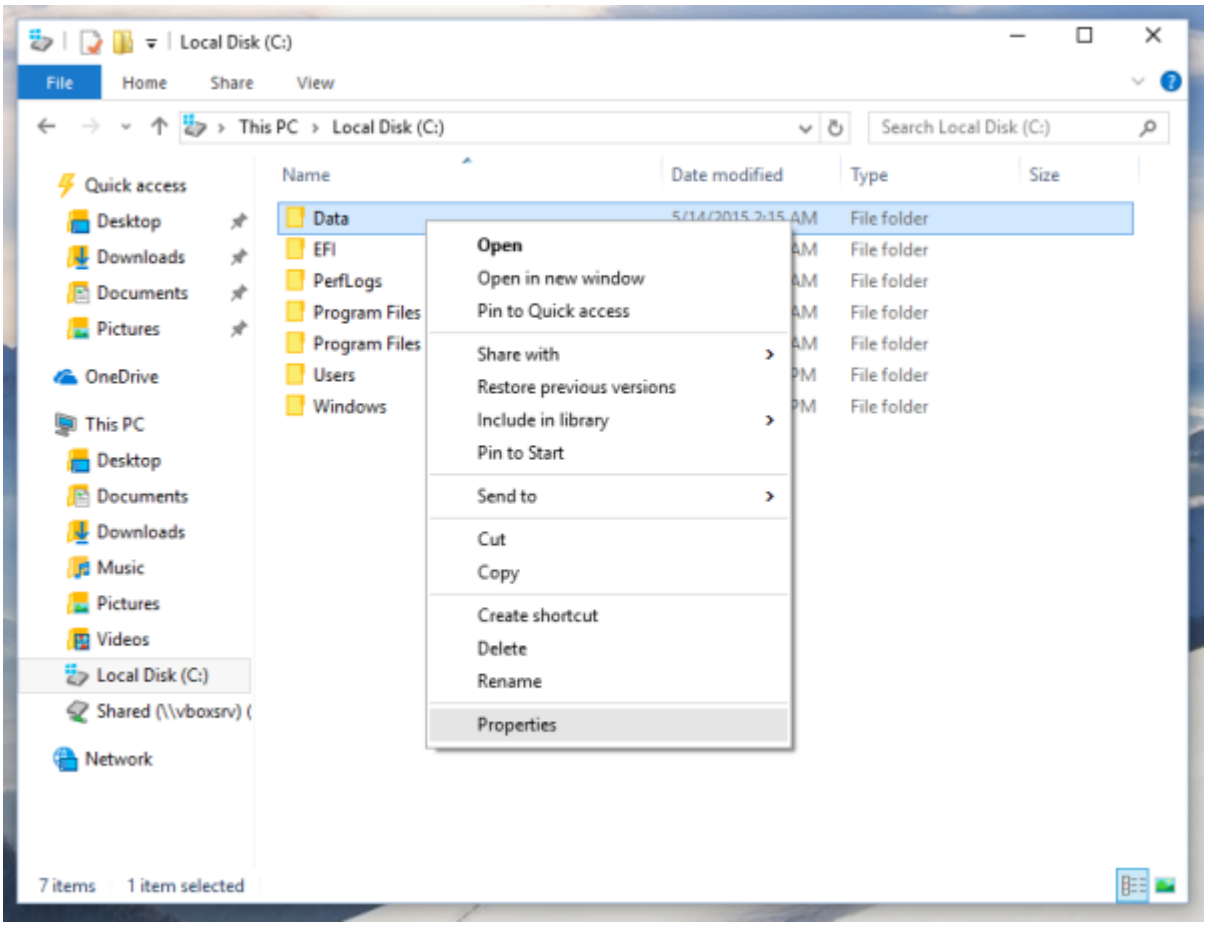
1. Open File Explorer, and then locate the file or folder you want to take ownership of.
2. Right-click the file or folder, click Properties, and then click the Security tab.



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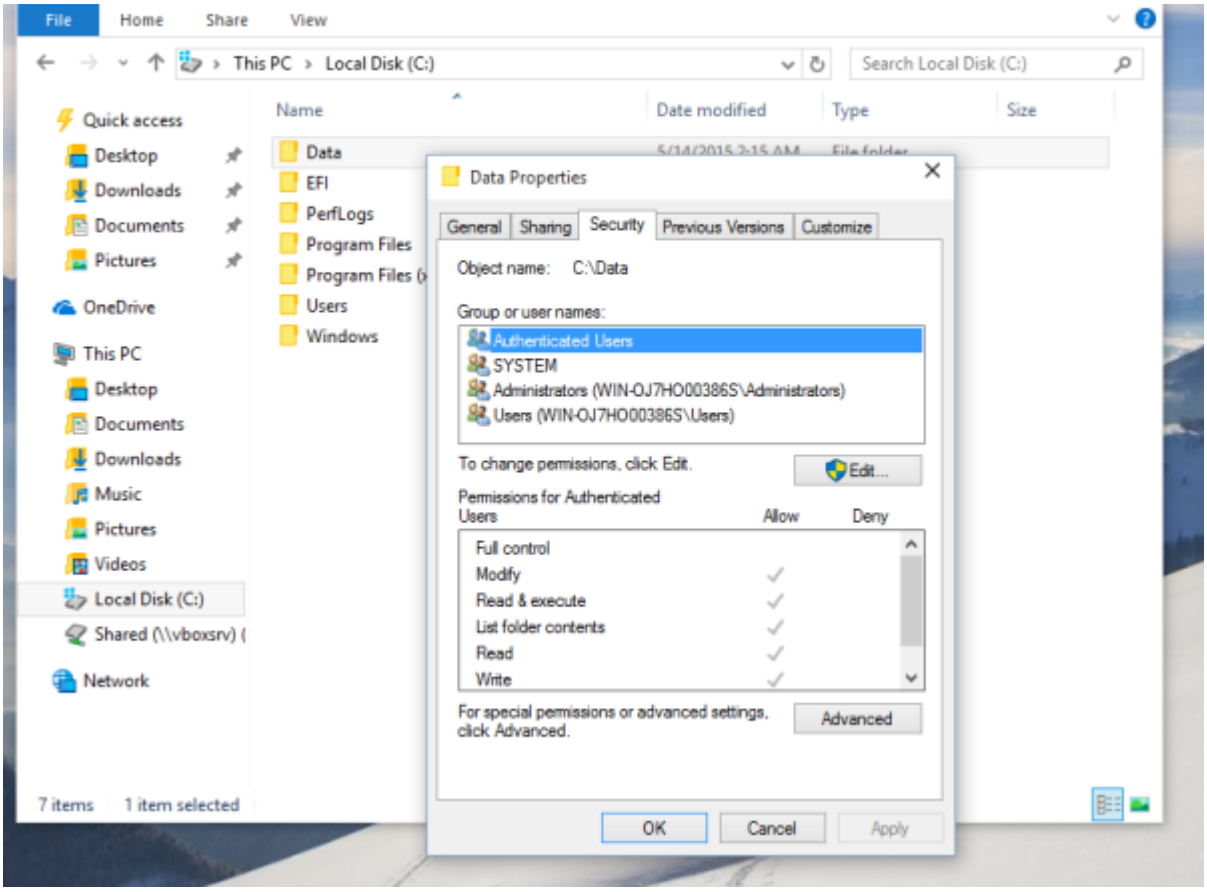

3. Click the Advanced button. The "Advanced Security Settings" window will appear. Here you need to change the Owner of the key.
   Click the Change link next to the "Owner:" label

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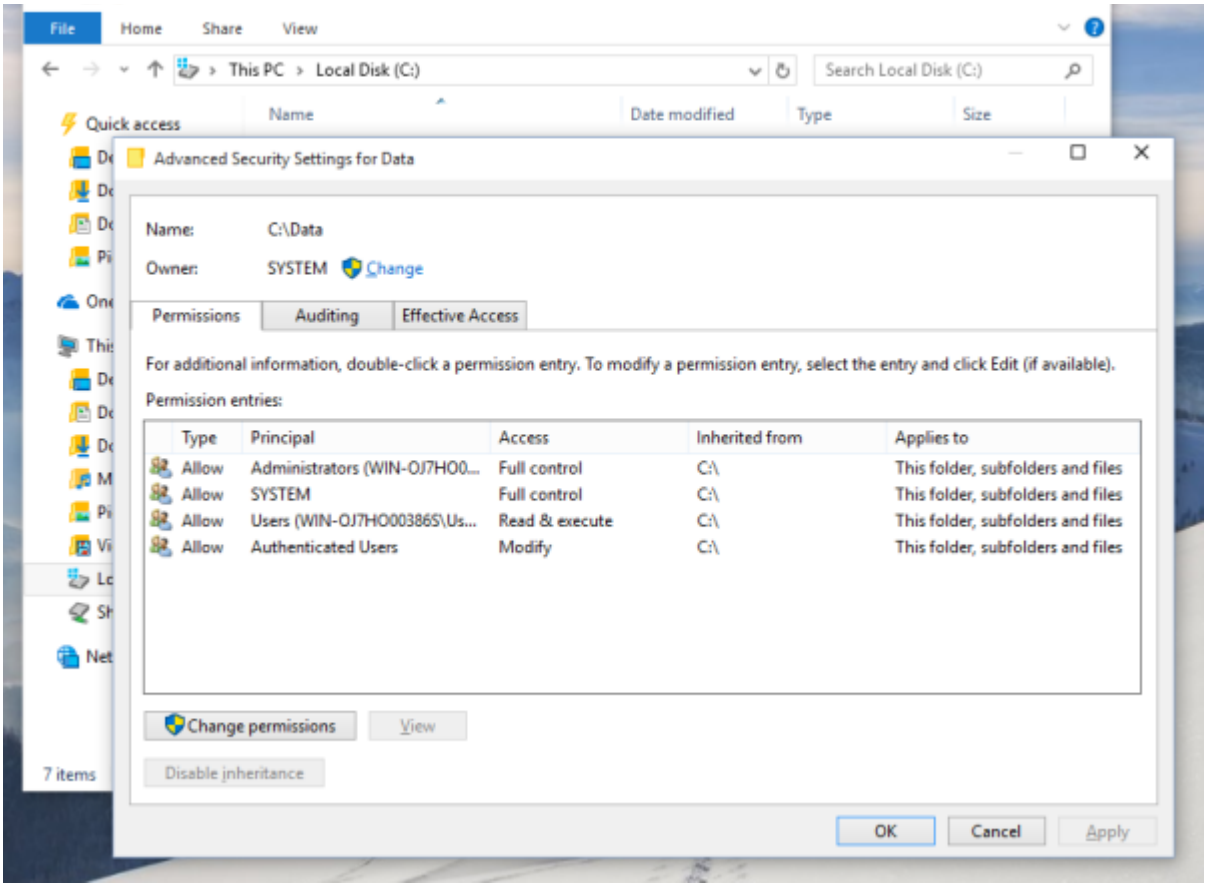

4. The Select User or Group window will appear.

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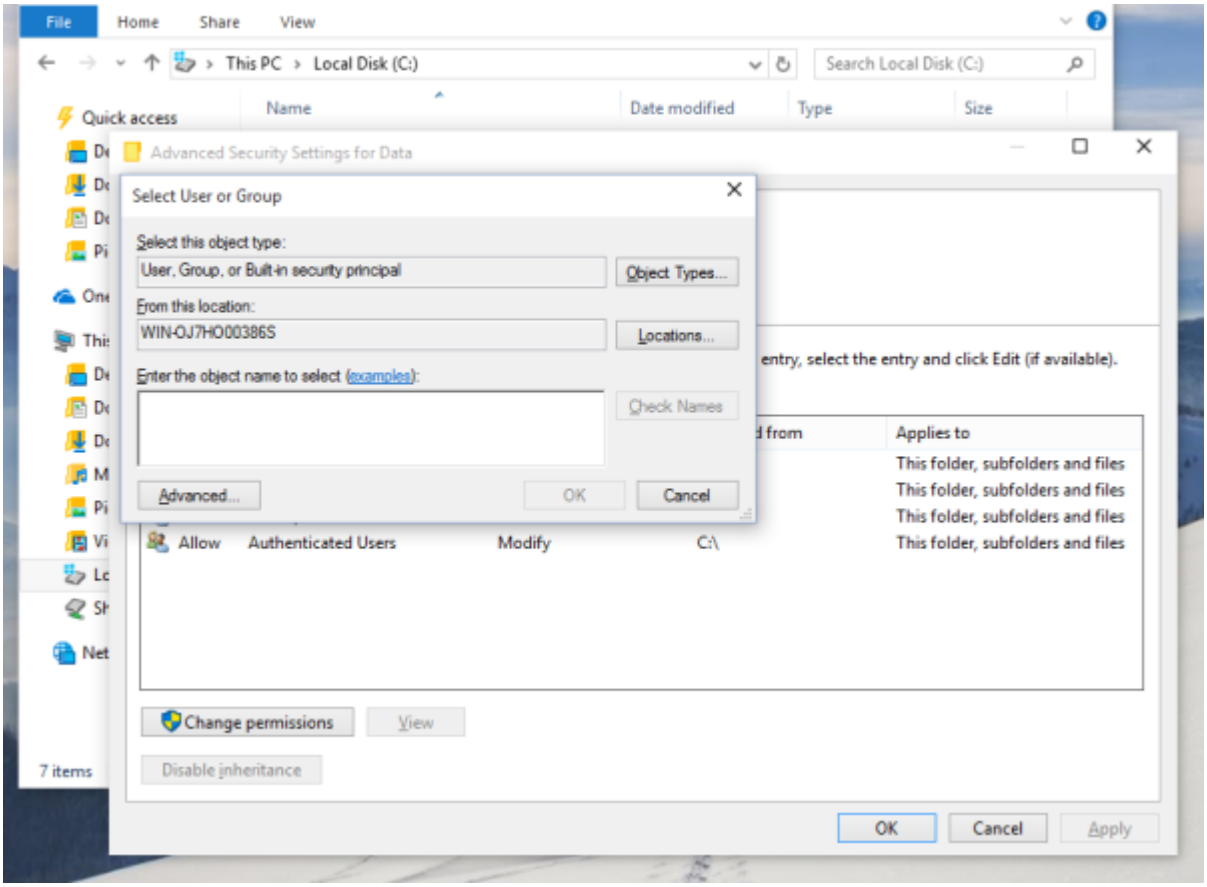

Select the user account via the Advanced button or just type your user account in the area which says 'Enter the object name to select' and click OK.

5. Optionally, to change the owner of all subfolders and files inside the folder, select the check box "Replace owner on subcontainers and objects" in the "Advanced Security Settings" window. Click OK to change the ownership.

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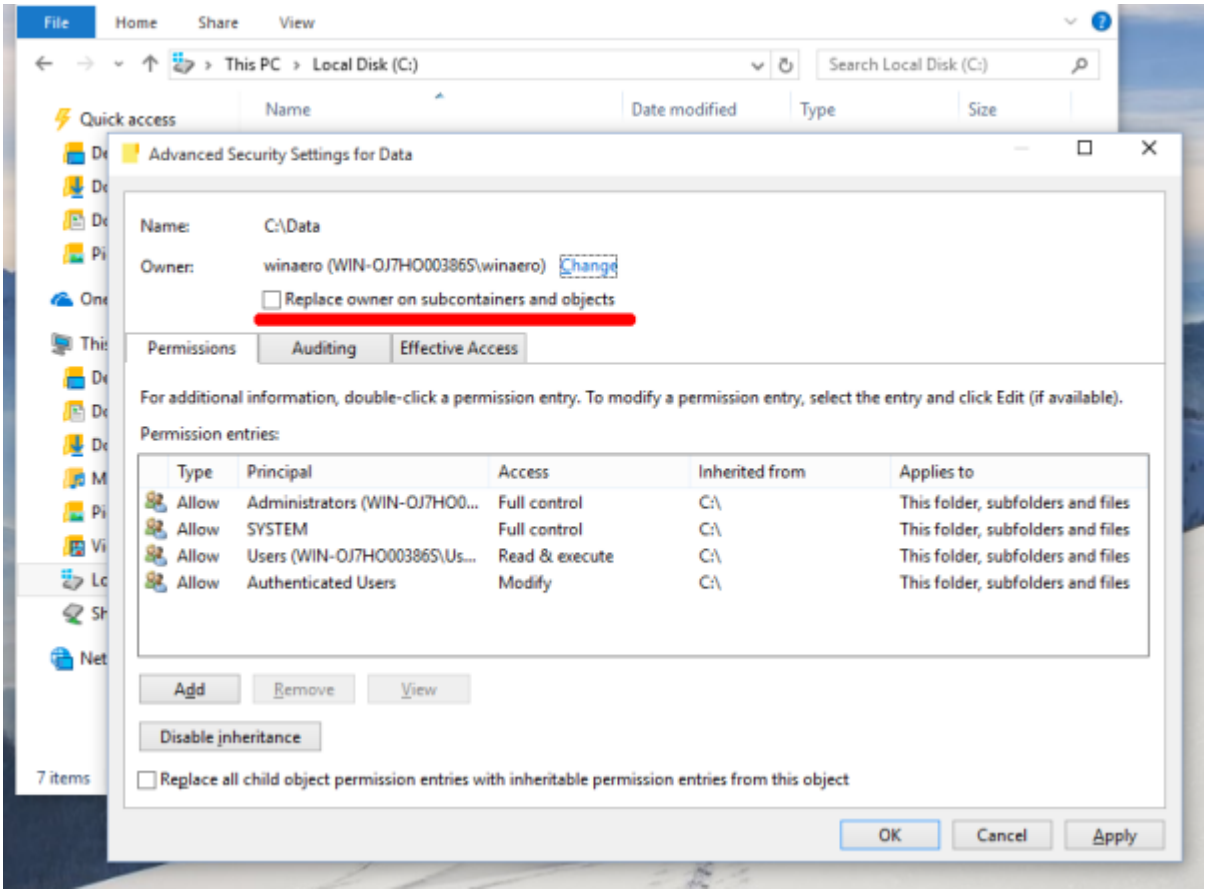

6. Now you need to provide full access to the file or folder for your account. Right-click the file or folder again, click Properties, and then click the Security tab.
7. Click the Add button. The "Permission Entry" window will appear on the screen:

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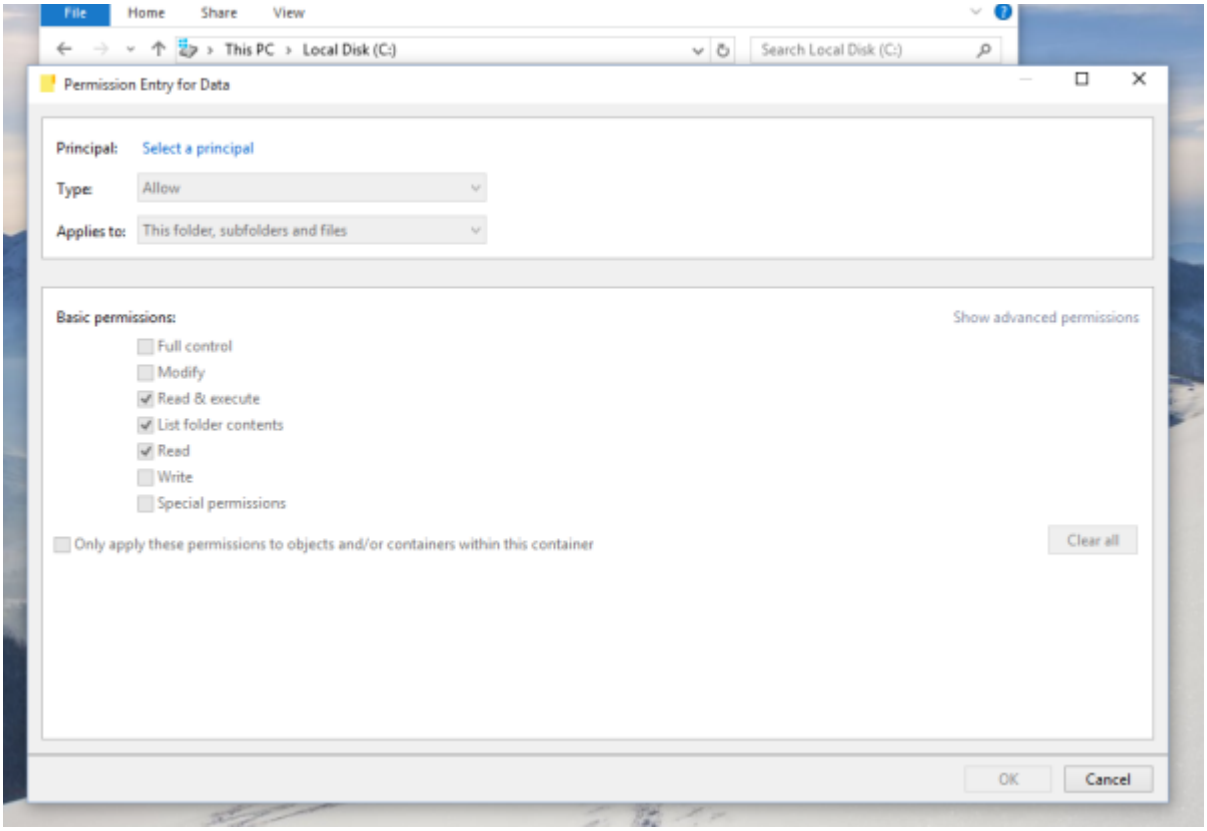
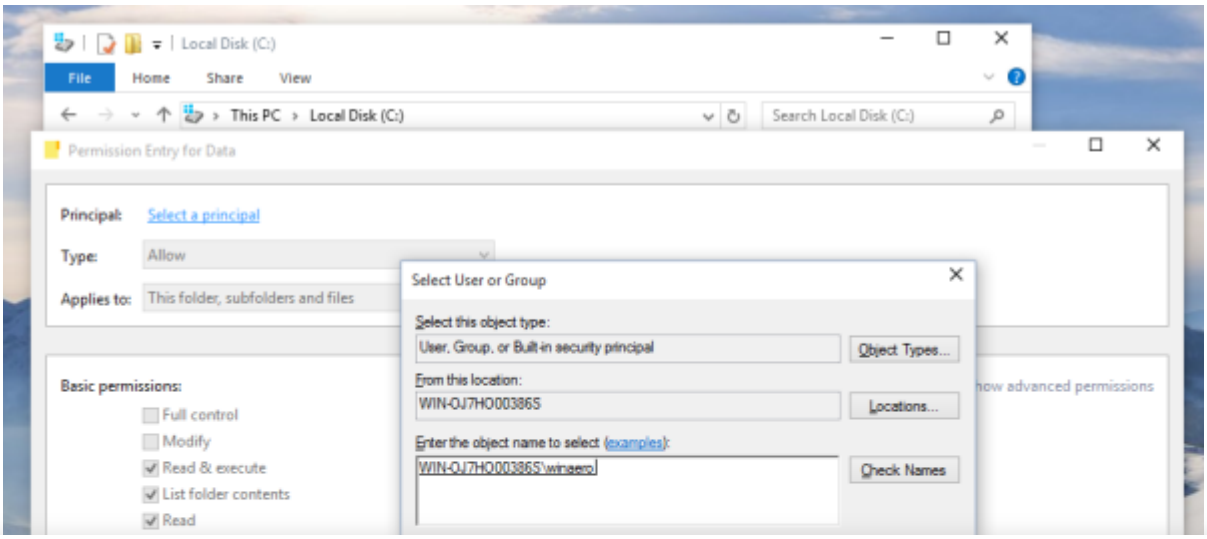


8. Click "Select a principal" and select your account:



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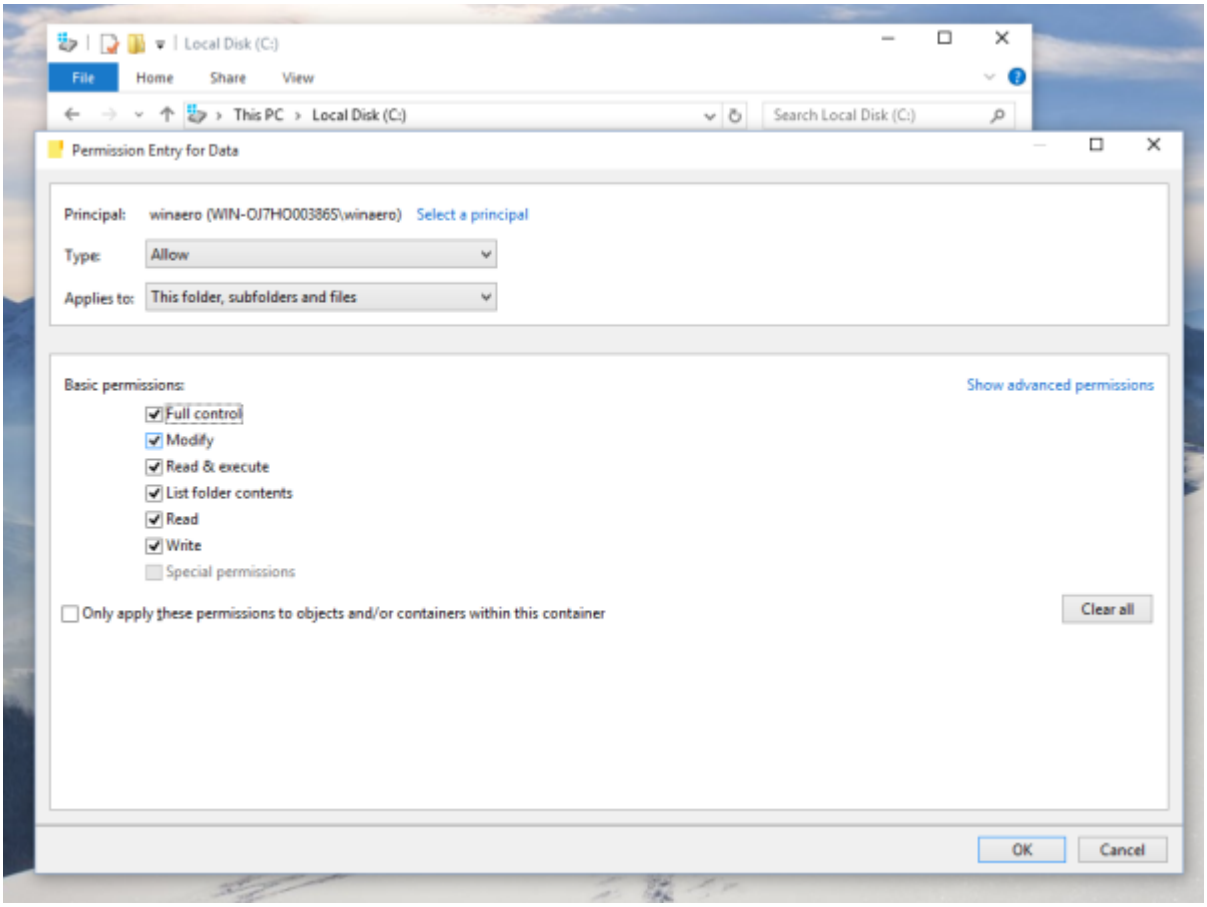

Click OK.

10. Optionally, click "Replace all existing inheritable permissions on all descendants with inheritable permissions from this object" in the "Advanced Security Settings" window.

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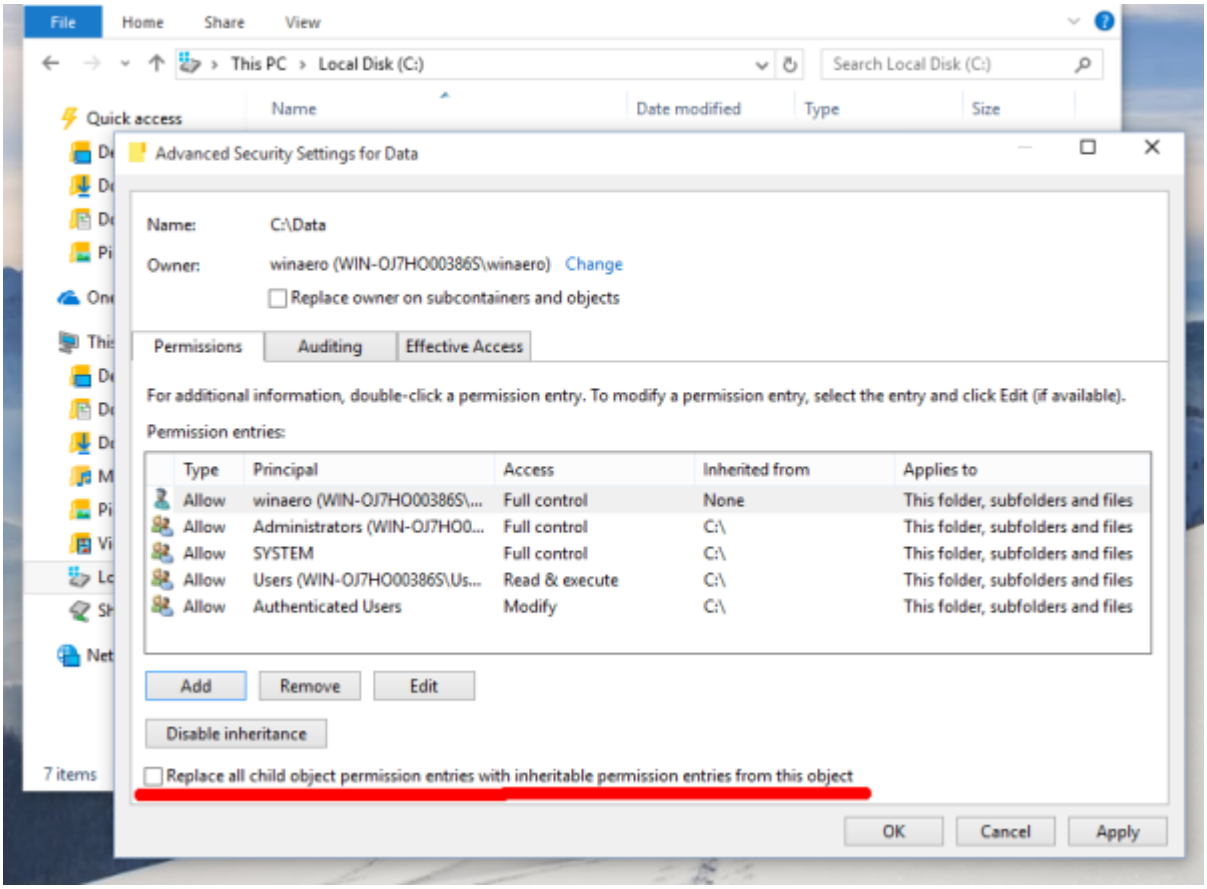

What it means is permissions on this parent object will replace those on its descendant objects. When cleared, permissions on each object, whether parent or its descendant, can be unique. Click OK to get full access to the file or folder.

That's it. You just changed the ownership and got full access to the file in Windows 10 using the File Explorer app.

See: **How to restore the TrustedInstaller ownership in Windows 10**

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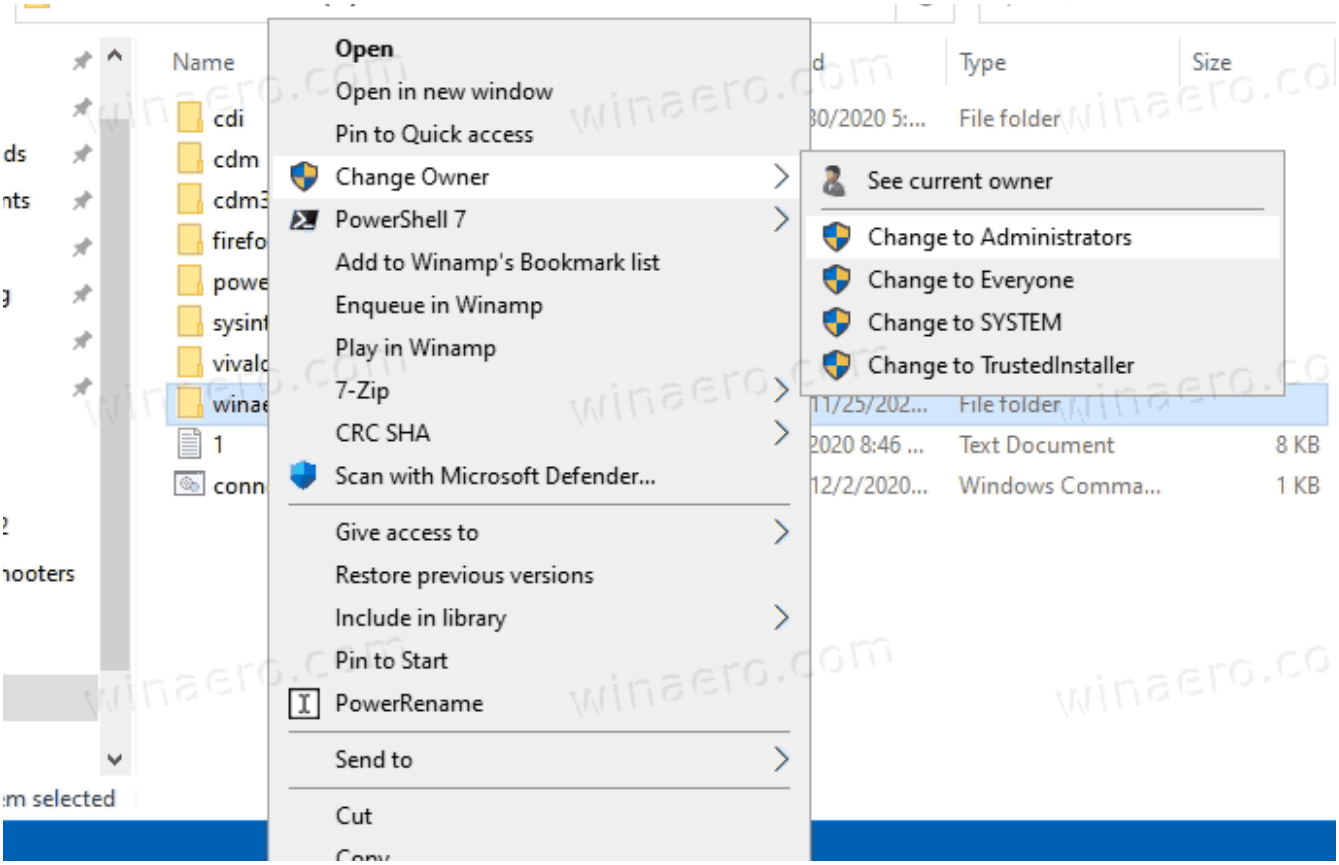

The context menu allows you to quickly change the owner to one of the following system accounts: the **Administrators** group, **Everyone**, **SYSTEM**, and **TrustedInstaller**. To learn more about the Change owner context menu, please refer to the following post.

How to Add Change Owner Context Menu in Windows 10

There, you will find ready-to-use Registry files, detailed instructions, and clarifications about how every context menu entry works. This will allow you to change the file, folder, or drive owner with one click.

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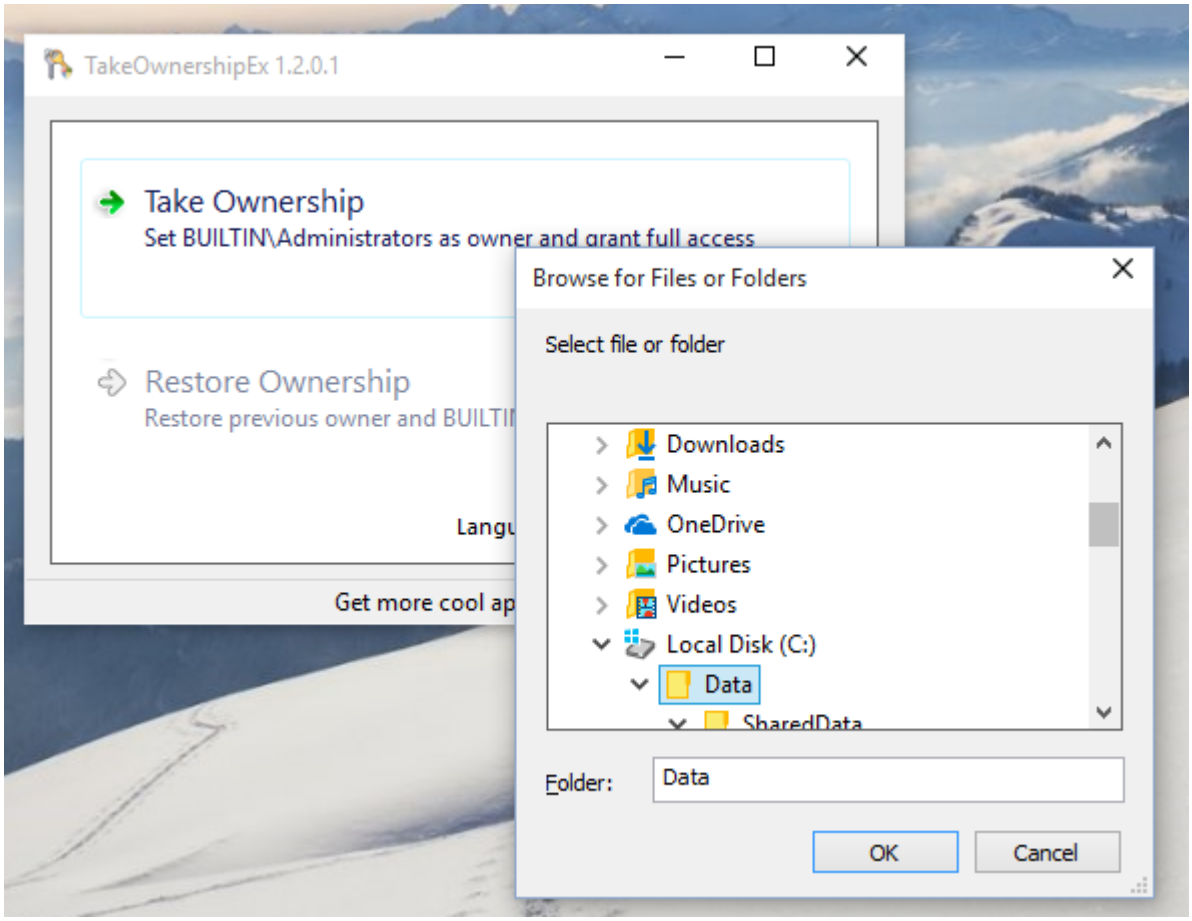

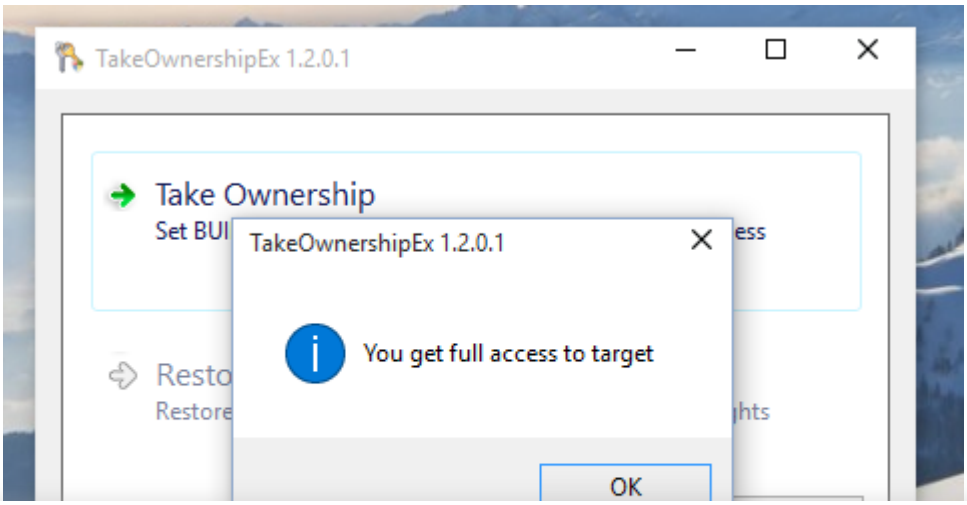

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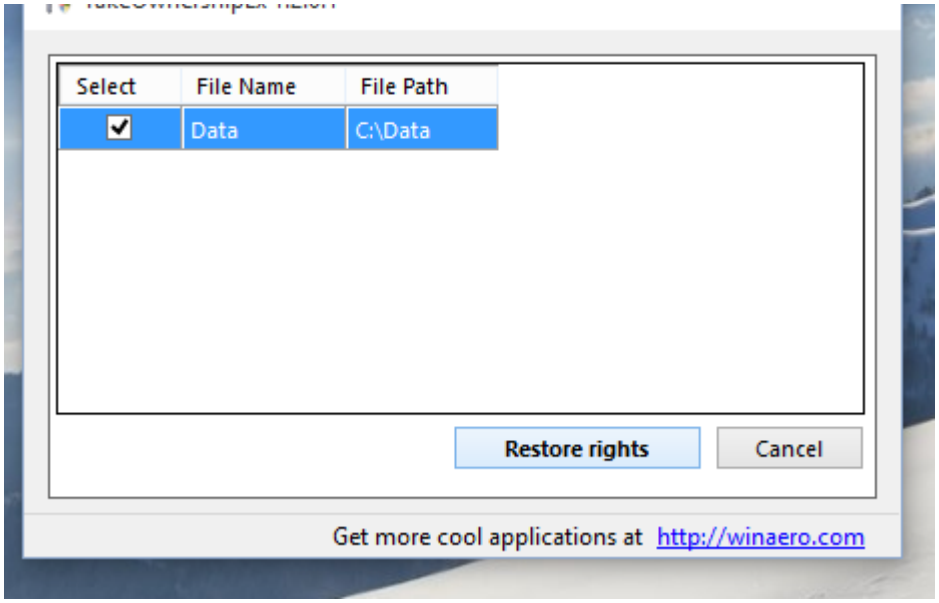

That's it. Using the TakeOwnershipEx app, you can save your time, but even if you prefer using the built-in options in File Explorer, it shouldn't be too hard task for you if you followed the instructions in this article.

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Sergey is writing about everything connected to Microsoft, Windows and popular software. Follow him on Telegram, Twitter, and YouTube. View all posts by Sergey Tkachenko

Sergey Tkachenko / May 26, 2015 / Windows 10 / take ownership, windows 10 file full access, windows 10 ownership

114 thoughts on "How to take ownership and get full access to files and folders in Windows 10"

Chris

August 21, 2015 at 8:33 pm

What is error code 19? I am trying to get into a folder that came from my backup using AOMEIbackupper

dan

June 20, 2016 at 6:54 am

Did you ever figure out this issue? I am having this exact problem.

Brikitty !

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computer I already own and owned it before windows 10?

Sergey Tkachenko

August 25, 2015 at 11:22 pm

Well, have you heard about NTFS permissions?

Ian B

August 30, 2015 at 12:52 am

I tried to do the above in Win10 to change permissions to the windows\en-US because WinHlp32 does not work in Windows 10.
I was not able to replace WinHlp32.exe.mui in the \en-US folder.

Anonymous

May 19, 2020 at 9:16 am

This isn't possible. You have to hold Shift while restarting to boot into the command prompt and copy manually.

Marc

June 9, 2019 at 1:50 am

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account. You are mistaken. Their have always been some folders created by other accounts such as system folders that even the administrator was locked out of for security reasons. This is basically another way to gain system access like how we used to do with tricking the NT_AUTHORITY account into thinking it was a user account.

Bob

September 20, 2015 at 1:51 am

Great advice…thank you! I had success with one file. All of my files (thousands) need to be fixed. What is the approach to fix them all at once?

Bob

September 20, 2015 at 2:03 am

Duh….Just do this for the big folders, and it works just fine. Thanks again.

Sergey Tkachenko

September 20, 2015 at 12:57 pm

You are welcome Bob

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October 24, 2015 at 9:03 am

Google search….took about 10 seconds to find and another 10 to DL.

Joost

October 28, 2015 at 11:50 am

Thanks for this lovely software, it saved me from reinstalling windows 10.
Problem solved: getting access to my windows credentials in Control Panel, and now my password to my NAS is finally remembered.
I guess some other problems will be solved too :-)

Steve Capps

November 19, 2015 at 6:35 am

Please clarify whether TakeOwnershipEx allows "Everyone" to have access or does it lock all other users out?
Thank you.

Sergey Tkachenko

November 19, 2015 at 1:13 pm

It allows "Administrators" to have access, does nothing with "Everyone".

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Mark Johnson

November 20, 2015 at 8:12 am

I can't do step 7 because the "Add" button is greyed out.

---

mick

November 20, 2015 at 8:21 am

It does nothing at all the software is FAIL

Sergey Tkachenko

November 20, 2015 at 12:28 pm

According to comments above, it is only for you.

---

total fail is there no one out there who can fix this administrator high jack by windows

September 28, 2016 at 8:40 pm

windows ten is a way for big brother to own you body and mind windows 10 sucks

---

leighton

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C:\>TAKEOWN /F C:\windows\system32 /S \\198.162.1.109 /U Leighton /P America /R /D y

TAKEOWN is already on windows 10. No download needed.

Starlinguk

December 3, 2015 at 2:22 pm

Result: lots of "access denied" messages. And then it unticks all the permissions again.

The infuriating thing is that Windows 10 resets all the permissions whenever it does an update and wrecks one of the programs I need for my job every time.

RealDeal

December 11, 2015 at 2:06 am

Because Windows 10 is very intrusive.

China Mike

August 8, 2016 at 5:47 am

Well, tell us how you really feel...

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September 20, 2017 at 9:58 am

Don't sugar coat it...

Ty

February 9, 2018 at 8:23 pm

Interesting opinion!
However, it did not help solving the problem.

Key

December 30, 2015 at 12:44 pm

good

Desmond Shaw

January 18, 2016 at 3:47 am

Thank you for this tutorial, but my trustedinstaller is still installed. I have a file called TrustedInstaller.exe.mui that I don't know how to remove and I need help with. When I try to remove it, it says: you require permission from administrators to make changes to make changes to this file. I tried the above technique, but there is no security tab.

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So, to become that HIGHER ADMIN, follow the steps on this wonderful guide: Enable or disable the Administrator account in Windows 10

K

February 5, 2016 at 7:58 pm

Now instead of the trusted installer denying me access now it is my own account event though it has full access.

I think Windows 10 in general is just a broken mess at this point with tons of corrupted system files. I remember having these same issues with Windows 8 when it was new and these issues (that normal users that only use their systems to navigate the internets or watch videos don't notice) weren't resolved till like a year later. Even Dism and SFC, tools designed to help you fix corrupted files, are broken and always require a Windows 10 wim file from an Iso as /source to /restorehealth. Seriously, if you're a programmer, gamer or something just avoid Windows 10 like the plague till all these little issues are ironed out because the struggle is not worth it.

Apogee777

August 9, 2016 at 9:35 am

i had no issues with win8, watched the world tantrum without the 7 start menu,

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since moving to ssd, all windows errors disappeared since win7 and ssd's are cheap now.
never had a better os for gaming, photoshop, etc yet and is far more optimised than win7
tech solutions with win98 was to format back then and hate win me, not realising a setup was in its cache resolving all errors, returned the user back to a fixed windows – again hdd errors.
1 os for the worlds dabbling, programming, etc etc basically a users pit of all sorts, used by humans which make mistakes,
made by the humans that make mistakes
and forums like this for us to vent,
but that will not change a thing in the bigger picture.
you cannot create an OS to cater for 100's of millions without faults.
been in the game for 30 years, programmed a 3d game at 14 years old on a vic20 in machine code.
treat your pc with care is all about i can really say..
(and avoid some seagate hdd's :P)

Wizardgus

May 31, 2017 at 7:39 pm

Amen! I bought this computer 6 months ago, finally top of the line gaming system. I hardly use it. Am thinking about taping a pound of tannerite to it and blow the SOB up. Why? Windows 10! :(

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March 3, 2016 at 5:36 pm

Thanks Sergey for helping me access my external hard drive
Truly grateful for your knowledge and generosity to post and share. Peter

---

Sergey Tkachenko

March 4, 2016 at 12:27 am

Don't mention it.

Rohit

March 12, 2016 at 9:25 am

PLEASE HELP !!... I've changed the ownership ...to the administrator..and I've also used takeownershipex which said I already have full rights but still I can't delete a folder...

Pavan Kumar M P

March 18, 2016 at 7:25 am

Thank you very much for your effort to build to such a good software. Its very nice and precise. It helped me a lot.

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message). That is, it seems it does not work, at least for this "sensitive" folder.

Mitch Mitchell

April 27, 2016 at 5:20 am

Brilliant stuff! I've been trying all sorts of things to gain access to files in many places and I've finally found the answer I've been looking for. My issue with the Dragon software; every time I opened it up it was making me start all over. Now it's working great; thanks again!

Sergey Tkachenko

April 27, 2016 at 11:05 am

You are welcome.

Patton

May 3, 2016 at 10:14 pm

It worked. Thank you very much.

Sergey Tkachenko

May 4, 2016 at 12:08 pm

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Shane

May 20, 2016 at 4:07 am

Thank you so much! Tried other solutions but they did not have the second step of setting permissions.

Sergey Tkachenko

May 20, 2016 at 10:34 am

you are welcome.

Inertia

June 8, 2016 at 2:23 am

"Replace owner on subcontainers and objects" is not available on my Advanced Security Settings window. Where is it? I'm having trouble deleting a folder with a bunch of subfolders that I would have to change individually, which is a pain in the a$$. Thank you.

John V. Osborne

June 29, 2016 at 6:32 pm

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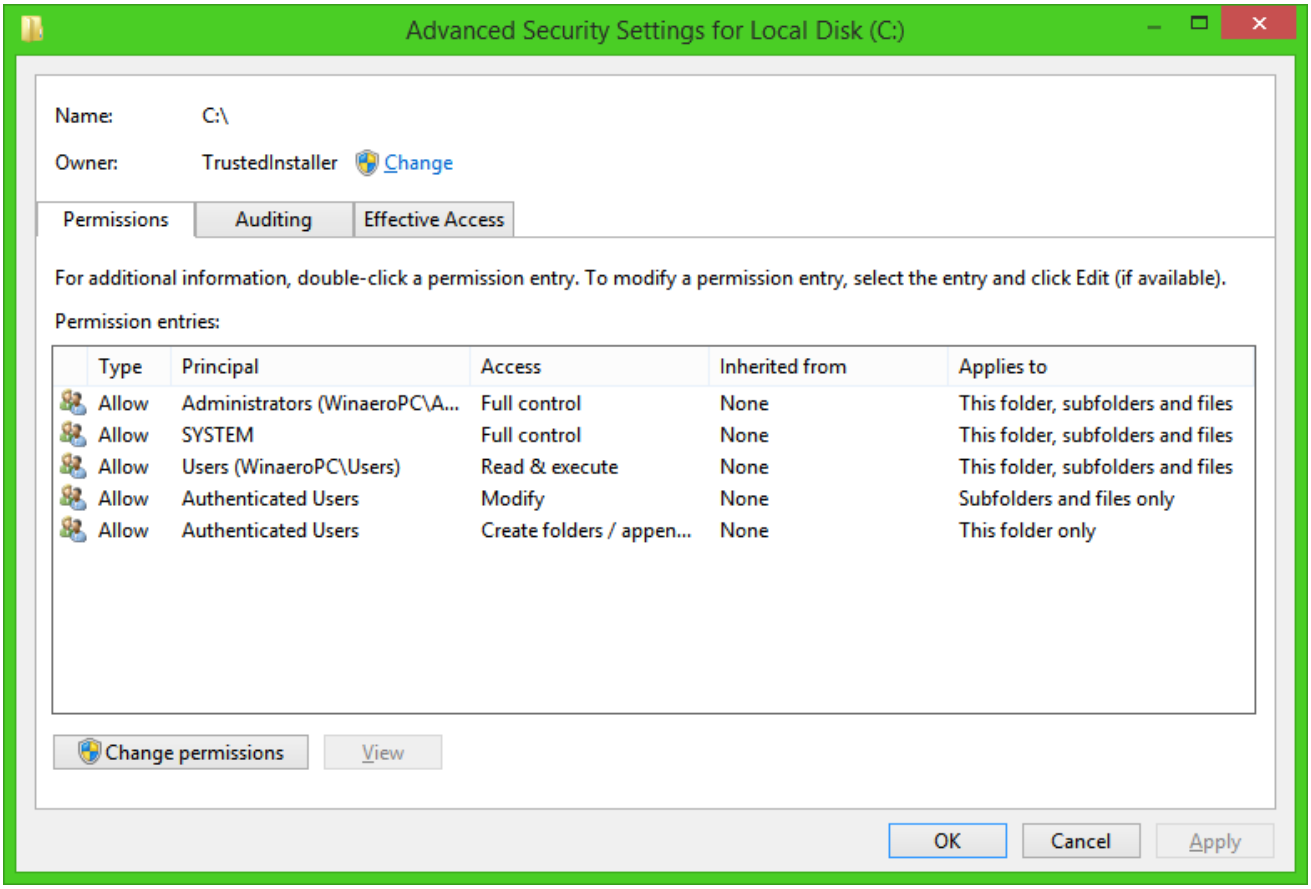
Your thoughts appreciated.

Sergey Tkachenko

June 29, 2016 at 9:17 pm

This is how it should be set:



John V. Osborne

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https://winaero.com/blog/how-to-restore-the-trustedinstaller-ownership-in-windows-10/

John V. Osborne

June 30, 2016 at 11:22 am

Thank you very much for your help. I will report after found time for further looking at the issue …

John V. Osborne

June 30, 2016 at 5:36 pm

Yep. Managed to set TrustedInstaller as owner.
(Originally S-1-5-21-1802859667-647903414-1863928812-35553 !!!???)
AND STILL GOT MODIFY ACCESS TO MY FILES IN C:\
HOORAY

User

June 30, 2016 at 8:38 am

Thanks alot man. You were amazing.
It worked for me lilke a charm.

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systems since Windows 3.1. They are all my files. I'm really glad I'm unable to open these files. It would be wrong, since I don't have permission. Belonging to Administrators – that's the magic bullet right?

David Cope

September 8, 2016 at 12:36 am

You're a lifesaver.

I've been trying to get access to back-up content from my old computer. Wasted over an hour trying to navigate the options to no good effect & this process cleared it up straight away.

:) :) :)

Ricksick

September 22, 2016 at 10:50 am

Just take control over the security center files or any other file and rename it. Now it won't load or bother you

---

Sam

September 24, 2016 at 2:24 am

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September 30, 2016 at 8:11 pm

You are a life-saver! Our Windows 8 build server was driving me crazy after a migration from the domain to a local user.

Thanks!

RAKESH

October 5, 2016 at 2:37 pm

Thanks for detailed procedure. Can I use it for claiming ownership at Disk level so that all Folders and
files are owned by me? This is required to own all the files on an external disk which had folders & files created
on my another computer running Windows XP & now I am unable to overwrite some of these files which files which exist on new computer running Windows 10.

Istvan Benedek

October 10, 2016 at 1:03 pm

Thanks a lot Sergey, you saved me from a complete reinstall! Could a Windows update cause such permission problems, or a virus maybe?

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Unfortunately the steps broken down at the top did not work… also, TakeOwnershipEx doesn't seem to work on all of my files :o. Any ideas?

Juliet

October 16, 2016 at 9:24 pm

Thanks for this tool! I used it in Windows 10 (installed the win8 version) and it works like a charm. Fixed my Windows Apps folder for me (had problems with the Microsoft Solitaire Collection)

Sergey Tkachenko

October 16, 2016 at 11:13 pm

You are welcome.

---

halserrano

October 23, 2016 at 2:45 am

Windows 10 Pro 1607 build 14393.321

Takeownershipex installs no problem, take ownership selected and confirmed, the items show up in the restore list, but i still get denied access message.

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OA

October 26, 2016 at 4:03 am

Can't get past step 7. There is no "add" button on the security tab. Outdated or erroneous tutorial.

Sergey Tkachenko

October 26, 2016 at 9:18 am

It have not changed yet. The button is there. Take a look at the screenshot in #6.

Tom

November 2, 2016 at 11:52 am

Is there a way to disable this feature completely? It is annoying and it takes a lot of time to do this every time.

Zain

November 28, 2016 at 9:25 am

Very useful description, solved my issue, bundle of thanks, God bless!

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Sergey Tkachenko

February 3, 2017 at 8:46 pm

Which folder/file?

Peter

February 10, 2017 at 11:57 pm

Sergey, did you take down the downloade to takeownershipex? All I see on the site is a download of Winaero Tweaker

---

Sergey Tkachenko

February 11, 2017 at 12:05 pm

Not yet. It is here https://winaero.com/download.php?view.16

---

oscar Lundmark

February 14, 2017 at 12:05 am

I somehow removed my access to C:\
HELP

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Stephen Chuka

February 2, 2018 at 2:45 am

I also have the same problem,how do you fix it?

Driver

February 19, 2017 at 10:37 pm

there is no security tab

Victor

March 17, 2017 at 7:09 am

Excellent! My problem was solvvd!!

---

abdulla

May 29, 2017 at 7:52 pm

its very rare to find an explanation in windows stuff as good as this one .. thank you

---

Sergey Tkachenko

May 29, 2017 at 8:20 pm

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you helped me a lot

Sombra

June 21, 2017 at 11:37 am

I did all the steps up to #7. The add button doesn't light up, is there a reason why it won't become usable?

Ellicott

June 27, 2017 at 6:46 pm

Hi

Thank you for the article. For a certain file, it doesn't seem work. For an example, C:\Program Files\Windows Defender\MsMpEng.exe on Windows 10. You can change the ownership of msMpEng.exe without any problem. However, if you want to have Full Control of the file, Click Apply, then error message: Unable to save permission changes on MsMpEng.exe. Access is denied.

Wonder if you have a solution to disable Windows Defender permanently. Thank you! -Ellicott 6/27/2017

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please see this article: Disable or enable Windows Defender in Windows 10

Joan Coma

July 22, 2017 at 5:25 pm

Now I can delete system32!! kappa

Sergey Tkachenko

July 22, 2017 at 7:28 pm

Enjoy. /s

Paul

August 10, 2017 at 3:52 am

As of 08/09/2017 TakeOwnershipEx worked like a charm. I couldn't get the manual instructions to work. When I used the app everything worked on the first try. Thanks!

Mark Rushworth

August 16, 2017 at 8:19 pm

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set this up already. Any suggestions please.

Sergey Tkachenko

August 17, 2017 at 12:04 am

Ensure that you have enabled the Network discovery feature on both PCs.

John

September 3, 2017 at 10:28 pm

For what it's worth I tried the manual fix (allowing access via the folder properties permissions) to no avail. Then I realized that the folder I was trying to delete was also on dropbox. I went to dropbox on line and deleted the folder. Back to W10 explorer and there it was.... GONE.

Em Spearing

January 1, 2018 at 1:52 pm

First, thank you for helping me clear a couple of files from my desktop. I only spent about half an hour on this. Next, a great big and heartfelt FY to all connected with Windows-10 for making what should be a straight forward task so GOD DAMNED ARCANE and a pain in the ass.

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app. I still am left with "Read-Only" (Only applies to files in folder). HELP.

Sergey Tkachenko

January 27, 2018 at 9:12 pm

which folder you are trying to access?

Boris Bigbee

January 28, 2018 at 3:28 pm

C:\CCS\PaperPort-Folders-in-CCS.

The CCS folder is mine, I added it to C:, and the \PaperPort-Folders-in-CCS is also mine, I added it to \CCS.

PaperPort-Folders-in-CCS itself contains lots of folders, and some of those folders contain folders (etc.) and each folder contains lots of files.

B

Sergey Tkachenko

January 28, 2018 at 10:09 pm

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Kimberly

February 16, 2018 at 12:36 am

Hi. I have tried and tried to give myself full control over the program files in windows 10. I need to be able to save one file in one folder under the PF but it will only let me copy files as read only. It will not let me save the full file directly. I'm so frustrated and don't know what to do.

I followed your instructions for the folder I need to save in as well as all the parent folders above it. It looks like I have full control yet when I try to save from excel directly to a folder under program files, it says I need administrator approval. Um, I AM the administrator! How can this be? So confused!

Any help would be appreciated.

Thomas Vreeke

March 7, 2018 at 10:12 pm

i get 'Invalid command line C' and that's it, what to do now?

Ron WIlliamson

May 15, 2018 at 5:20 pm

If you have problems exercising this privilege you probably should think twice about

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ups for ages an unable to do so,
first try your program took them away,
Thanks for the advice an program

---

ramyar

June 8, 2018 at 12:24 pm

this method is great for a person who want delete files that windows permission wont let us.
now i can delete my previous windows. without any application
thank you man
:)

Yumi

September 4, 2018 at 2:56 am

Thanks a lot! It worked perfectly! :)

Ted Socia

September 5, 2018 at 4:45 am

yeah this doesn't work for the file Im trying to get control of.

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offering to re-order.
BYW, I did this on a VMware virtual machine running Windoze 8.1 (everything was the same as you described, which was a surprise). It was a clone of a physical machine, and inherited the cruft from it.

David S. H.

November 23, 2018 at 9:56 pm

I had a couple extra steps but got access to my folders.

I had to first give ownership to "PC-NAME\Users" (with replace owner in subfolders box ticked). That allowed me to see the files but they still wouldn't open.
So back under folder properties > security tab, I clicked Edit then Add, and this time in the Select User & Group window I added "PC-NAME\Administrator", OK and then ticked the full control tick box.

Steve F

March 16, 2019 at 12:09 pm

I currently have Windows 10 Version 1809 (Build 17763.379) installed. When I use TakeOwnershipEx on a file in the Windows Folder, the permissions are set as you have said they should be: Owner changed to Administrators and Administrators given full control. However, I cannot edit the file and then save it with those rights. In order to save it, I have to add my User-ID with full control to that file. My User-ID

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May 10, 2019 at 1:17 am

It is not working with my win 10

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jn

October 29, 2020 at 3:49 pm

Why is so annoying ?

Sam

February 12, 2021 at 4:31 am

Is there any way to gain ownership of operating system files? I know I am not supposed to do that, but in the past, it has been the only way to get rid of the stranglehold operating systems features like Cortana have on a new system. It is also the only way to object to real back-door access, by ensuring you always have the right to operate on system files. Please help.

Kurt

March 29, 2021 at 8:27 am

Hey Winaero Tweaker dev, I messed around with your superpower and screwed up.

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appreciate your help!

Thank you.

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